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ABSTRACT

This report summarizes a 1982 conference held in Albany, New York, to begin planning for a state-funded program which will provide $1.3 million annually for regionally coordinated collection development among libraries in New York public and non-profit independent colleges and universities. A preface detailing the context in which the conference was held and an introduction precede summaries of discussions at four small group workshop sections, which were oriented toward exploring the major considerations in developing regional plans. Lists of advantages and disadvantages of coordinated collection development and regional planning tasks, and discussion of strategies for overcoming obstacles and establishing overall planning approaches to coordinated collection development are provided. The largest section of the report comprises summaries of five conference presentations on changes in higher education and their impact on coordinated collection development; planning techniques for establishing coordinated collection development; procedures for describing, assessing, and comparing library collections; examples of using OCLC tapes to describe collection strengths and overlap; and processes for assessing the impact of coordinated collection development programs. Seven charts are included in the OCLC presentation. (ESR)

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NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY CONFERENCE ON PLANNING FOR COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

May 12-13, 1982

SUMMARY OF PAPERS AND DISCUSSIONS

Sponsored by the New York State Library
Conducted by the Office of Management Studies
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SUMMARY OF PAPERS AND DISCUSSIONS

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PREFACE: CONTEXT FOR THE CONFERENCE

Enactment of a comprehensive library resource sharing program as Chapter 718 of the Laws of 1981 resulted in an unprecedented expansion of aid to New York's libraries. One of the most significant parts of this law is the $1.3 million annual program for coordinated collection development in academic libraries which participate in regional resource sharing. Both public and non-profit independent colleges and universities are eligible to participate in the program.

Under this program each of the Reference and Research Library Resources Systems is required to prepare a regional collection development plan with the final plan to be in place by 1983. This planning is phased, calling for submission in December 1981 of a "plan to prepare a plan," in mid-1982 a report showing substantial progress in planning, and a final plan by 1983. Use of the grant funds will be tied to these plans.

The reference and research library systems face problems in meeting the planning requirement on a timely basis. The regions range from one containing as few as 11 eligible academic institutions to the largest, which contains more than 50 eligible academic institutions. None of the systems currently has a regional coordinated collection development plan, although many individual institutions have collection development policies and plans, some reference and research library systems have cooperative acquisitions plans, and some have inventories of special collections. There are standing cooperative acquisitions committees in most of the reference and research library systems, and the Capital District has experimented with specific subject assignments for cooperative acquisitions. Several institutions have also used the American Library Association collection analysis techniques, based on a system developed at Columbia University.

At regional meetings held in September, 1981 in New York City and Albany, over 50 representatives of major academic libraries and the nine reference and research councils met to discuss the regulations for the academic libraries' participation in the Coordinated Collection Development Aid Program, and much of their discussion focused on the possible shape of the regional plan. Both State Library staff and Reference and Research Library Resources Systems agree on the need to look beyond present efforts in the development of a comprehensive plan which will respond to future growth and changes in information technology.

It was anticipated that in most regions the coordinated collection development plan will be prepared by committees, rather than by a consultant or other individual. This underscored the need to provide planners with some shared experience in the process of plan development in order to assure common understanding of the parameters, format, and potential of a coordinated collection development plan. Consequently, a conference to provide this experience was discussed with the Reference and Research Library Resources System directors in November, 1981, and received their approbation.

The purpose of the conference was to provide, in an academic setting, an opportunity for State Education Department staff, representatives of academic libraries and representatives of the reference and research library systems to work with nationally recognized experts to:

1. Examine some of the techniques and problems in regional (interinstitutional) coordinated collection development planning.

2. Delineate a useful coordinated collection development planning process for New York State.

3. Produce an outline of the ordered elements of a regional plan.

Since the plans must provide for participation by all academic libraries within the region, but ultimately are expected to have much broader implications for multi-type library coordinated collection development planning, the plan format, a product of the conference, must meet the immediate requirements of the law and regulations and also provide for future expansion to include other types of libraries. The conference objectives, therefore, were:

1. To provide an update on the state of interinstitutional coordinated collection development planning throughout the country and to make participants aware of other regional plans currently developed or under development.

2. To make participants aware of current techniques of applying standard measurements or descriptions to collections in order to provide for clear mutual understandings of holdings prior to planning. This would include computer-based analyses of acquisitions, use, and inter-institutional lending as tools for planning.

3. To provide assistance in determining the process by which a diverse group reaches agreement on a common concern such as coordinated collection development.

4. To identify potential problems and conflicts in order to allow planners to reconcile institutional and cooperative goals and objectives.

5. To define basic steps that may be involved in developing a plan.

6. To develop recommendations on a format for a plan.

7. To examine how this planning may ultimately be extended to public and other libraries.

Among the specific issues that were expected to figure in the discussion were the relationships between local autonomy and regional cooperation; faculty views of resource sharing; New York State Interlibrary Loan (NYSILL) redesign and document delivery systems; preservation as a collection

development responsibility; the position of major research libraries in relation to other libraries in their region, the State and the nation; other cooperative networks and activities which affect regional collection development (e.g., the Research Libraries Group); the relation of regional cooperation to statewide planning, and the legislative and future funding outlook.

In the context of the conference it is also important to note that the Coordinated Collection Development Aid program is one of several programs involving and assisting academic libraries and encouraging broad scale resource sharing. Others include the Reference and Research Library Resources Systems, the New York State Interlibrary Loan System, presently requested legislation for a technological development fund, and the recommendations of the Commissioner's Committee on Statewide Library Development for further development of regional and statewide library resource sharing and automation including substantial funding for regional sharing through regional multitype library organizations.

Joseph F. Shubert
State Librarian and
Assistant Commissioner for Libraries

INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes a conference held in Albany, New York in May, 1982 to begin planning for a newly funded state program of coordinated collection development. The Office of Management Studies of the Association of Research Libraries worked closely with the New York State Library and with a Conference Planning Committee in designing and operating the Conference, which was intended to provide participants from around the State with the understanding and expertise necessary to develop and implement coordinated collection development plans in each of the State's nine Reference and Research Library Resources regions.

The Conference included presentations by five librarians in the general area of planning for cooperative collection development and a series of small group workshop sessions oriented toward exploring the major considerations in developing the regional plans. Summaries of the presentations and the workshop sessions are included in this report.

To this observer-participant, the Conference provided valuable background in the issues related to coordinated collection development and offered an opportunity for the participants to begin discussing and resolving some of the very difficult problems inherent in developing cooperative library programs. The participants worked long and hard at the workshop assignments and made valuable contributions to the understanding of the possibilities for and obstacles to effective coordinated collection development. Their work will be valuable in planning for the future of this program in New York State.

In planning and operating the Conference, I was grateful for the fine work done by the Planning Committee: Charles Custer, Anne Mitchell, Ben Richards, James Turner, and James Wyatt. Dorothy Smith, from the New York State Library, provided invaluable advice and support throughout the planning process, and Barbara Rice, also from the New York State Library, contributed much to the success of the small group workshop sessions. I greatly appreciate their help.

Jeffrey J. Gardner, Associate
Office of Management Studies
Association of Research Libraries

SUMMARY OF SMALL GROUP WORKSHOP SESSIONS

Introduction

The Conference was designed as a two-track event, with one track consisting of formal presentations by outside speakers and the other consisting of small group workshop sessions. These sessions were designed to cover some of the major factors requiring consideration in the development of regional plans for coordinated collection development. The intent of this second track was to provide participants with some experience in dealing with the issues, to provide an opportunity to share individuals' thinking on the issues, and to develop a cadre of individuals from each region to assist in regional planning.

Small group sessions were operated during the two days; each session including consideration of a distinct set of issues, leading to oral presentation of reports to the full conference. The general results of these sessions are summarized below.

Session I: Advantages and Disadvantages of Coordinated Collection Development

The purpose of the discussions in this session was to begin to develop a shared understanding of the potential advantages of coordinated collection development and to identify some of the major obstacles to operating a program that is effective and satisfactory to a variety of academic libraries. The results of the discussions of the various groups are summarized below.

The groups identified potential advantages of a coordinated collection development program, including those listed below:

* Assists movement toward sharing costs of developing and maintaining broad collections in New York State.
* Extends collection coverage within the State.
* Reduces duplication of specialized materials and staff.
* Responds to current demands for greater accountability by public service organizations.
* Increases individual libraries' ability to focus their acquisitions on local primary collecting areas.
* Can provide a basis for assigning preservation responsibilities.
* Can create increased opportunity for local deacquisitions, thereby reducing space requirements.
* Provides a basis for ongoing institutional cooperation.
* Enhances the availability of material to users throughout the state.

* Serves as an incentive for more and better planning by librarians and administrators.

* Serves as an incentive for development of more effective delivery systems.

* Serves as a stimulus to more responsive allocation of resources within individual institutions.

The possible disadvantages of, or obstacles to, effective coordinated collection development were similarly listed. In most cases these were viewed as not insurmountable, but as requiring considerable thought in terms of how the regions would alleviate their impact. They are listed below.

* There is a concern on the part of the larger libraries that the emphasis on regional relationships will reduce the demands on the state ILL system and the resultant fees to them for ILL transactions.

* Some libraries - particularly research libraries - are concerned about heavy outside demands on their collections.

* Reliance on coordinated collection development can lead to access problems due to delivery system deficiencies.

* Some libraries will resist taking full advantage of the program because of a reluctance to rely on others' collections.

* There will be costs associated with increased ILL service and with managing and coordinating the program.

* It is sometimes difficult to perceive common interests among very different insititutions.

* There appears to be considerable reluctance among users, particularly faculty, to support resource sharing programs which they believe will delay access to materials.

* There is some risk that college and university administrators will have unrealistic expectations of cost savings.

* Many libraries have pre-existing resource sharing commitments which may conflict with the new program.

* There is a need for improved bibliographic access among libraries.

* Some libraries have local use restrictions which will need to be adapted.

* There is concern that some librarians will feel threatened by the need to adapt their mode of operation.

* There is a lack of coordination of curriculum planning among institutions, leading to an ongoing need to duplicate collections.

* There is concern that the program could lead to a diminution of local control over collection development decisions.

* It will be difficult to select specific subject areas for cooperation.

Session II: Strategies for Overcoming Obstacles to Coordinated Collection Development

During this workshop session each of the small groups selected an obstacle from its list and developed plans for reducing the impact of the obstacle. The intent was to move toward considering specific actions which would need to be considered within the regions and to introduce one element of a planning process to the participants. Samples of the results of these discussions are presented below.

*Several groups dealt with the need to establish equity between the program's perceived benefits and costs, especially for the larger library participants. Possible approaches to this issue included: resolution of the concerns through discussions among directors of the larger libraries, directors of the Reference and Research Library Resources Systems, and the state library; consideration of possible amendments to the legislation to increase allocations to net lenders within the regions; or the design of an allocation process which would be based on criteria other than student enrollment. Collection size was considered as one such possible criterion. Another approach to the issue of developing equity among participating libraries included the development of regional ILL codes to ensure that requests for materials within regions would not automatically be forwarded to the larger libraries. One group also mentioned the need to develop improved bibliographic access within regions so that requesting libraries could avoid overtaxing the larger institutions.

*The need to deal with user resistance to resource sharing and coordinated collection development led to consideration of several strategies. One was to develop an information package describing the benefits of such a program and to present these materials at meetings with groups of key users. This would require some effort at identifying user resistance and determining its roots. There was some interest in having Reference and Research Library Resources Systems directors coordinating this effort and developing a standard package which could be available to all participating libraries. There was also some consideration of the need to prove the effectiveness of the program to users through effective service, i.e. efficient location and delivery of material to users.

Session III. Overall Approach to Coordinated Collection Development and Available Methods for Determining Collection Strengths and Weaknesses

Discussions during this session focused on designing a hypothetical, but realistic, collective of libraries within the Reference and Research Library

Resources Systems regions and determining some general approaches to utilizing the state funds for coordinated collection development. There was also some discussion of methodologies for describing and assessing collections in a comparable way to determine regional collection strengths and weaknesses.

One approach to the use of state funds for coordinated collection development which was described was to apply it to the purchase of large reprint and microform sets which might not otherwise be available in the region. It was noted that this approach would require some centralized method for identifying and selecting titles and would probably require one of the region's libraries to serve as a depository for the material. Another approach focused on the description and assessment of collections and recommended serious consideration of the use of OCLC tape analysis to describe quantitative collection strengths within a particular region. Weaknesses of this approach include the lack of retrospective OCLC tapes for some libraries, the fact that some major academic libraries participating in the program are not OCLC members, and the emphasis on quantitative measures without attention to qualitative measures, or judgments, about the collections.

Another group moved toward an approach which would identify and build on recognized strengths within the region. There was some discussion of the long-term possibility of encouraging exchanges among libraries to build single-location subject collections and this group also raised the need to identify specific weaknesses in the region and to assign libraries the task of filling in these regional gaps. A similar approach was taken by another group which presented the idea of identifying a limited number of subject areas with weak or non-existent collection coverage in the region and focus the funds toward building up these areas. This group felt that the assessment of collections could be done via shelf list counts, review of ILL statistics, review of local and region-wide faculty requests for purchase, and an analysis of user complaints related to collections.

Session IV. Optional Approaches to Developing Regional Plans for Coordinated Collection Development

At this point in the Conference, the groups began to determine ways in which the various regions could approach the development of their plans for implementing the State's new coordinated collection development program. Recognizing that the legislation creating and funding the program includes some general guidelines and restrictions, there is considerable latitude in the way in which each region operates the program. The intent of the group discussions in this session was to begin to explore how the regions could go about developing plans that would respond to their unique needs while fulfilling the requirements of the legislation. The discussions centered around three general areas: who should work on the development of the plan within each region; what are some of the tasks that those people will need to do to complete a plan; and what elements should be common to each region's plan.

Who should do the planning?

The groups agreed that each region's plan should be developed by a representative group, but there were different conclusions regarding the group's membership. Some felt that all types of libraries within a region should be represented; others felt that only academic libraries should be represented. There was some concern that the planning group include representatives of large and small libraries, public and private institutions, public systems (e.g. CUNY and SUNY), two-year, four-year and graduate institutions, and academic libraries that are receiving state funds under the program as well as those that are not. There was considerable concern that the groups be small enough to be able to work effectively and that they include collection specialists as well as directors. Finally, there was general agreement that the Reference and Research Library Resources System director be included and that Board member participation be considered.

What tasks do the planning groups need to carry out?

Among the possible tasks, or steps, which the discussions identified are the following:

* The preparation of a charge to the planning committee, perhaps from the Reference and Research Library Resources System Board, which would outline what the committee is expected to cover, indicate deadlines, and specify requirements for formal written reports. It was also felt that the charge should indicate legislative requirements and the Commissioner's regulations.

* Definition of the problem and determining goals. Some of the groups emphasized the need to develop a clear understanding among the committee members of just what they are dealing with and what they want to end up with. While this is largely a group maintenance task, there was considerable agreement that it would be a worthwhile expenditure of time.

* The collection of information needed to make planning decisions. Information required would include a descriptive listing of cooperative collection programs in which the region's libraries currently participate. These would include local, regional and national programs. The discussions also indicated the importance of determining any special concerns or needs of participating libraries prior to developing the plan, since broad acceptance of the plan will be essential to its long term success. Techniques available for collecting this information include interviews, either in person or by phone, and surveys. The choice of technique would depend on the number of libraries involved, the number of questions that need to be asked, and the availability of people to work on the data collection. While the director of libraries might be the contact person for smaller libraries, larger libraries would be asked to appoint a contact person.

* A major data collection effort was suggested by several of the groups to develop an understanding of collection strengths and

weaknesses within the regions. Several techniques for accomplishing this exist and there was considerable discussion of these. On the one hand, many of the participants felt that the process needed to remain relatively inexpensive, simple and straightforward. On the other hand, there was concern that the process of analyzing collection strengths needed to be substantive and needed to provide a solid base for making collecting assignments into the future. Possible approaches to determining relative collection strengths among the participating libraries included: shelf list measurements, surveys of collection development librarians' perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of their collections, analysis of current acquisitions budgets and allocations, analysis of OCLC tapes, and analysis of ILL data and records. It was assumed that each region would select the approach(es) most appropriate to it in terms of required information, available resources, and number and types of participating libraries.

* The next step which was suggested for the planning process was the development of a draft plan which would include an outline of how the funds should be expended within individual libraries, an indication of primary subject, discipline or format responsibilities (if appropriate), and a determination of how bibliographic access and document delivery will be coordinated within the region. Again, it was felt that these decisions may vary among the regions and that there are additional options, including that of using the funds in a pool to purchase expensive sets.

* Review of the draft plan by the regions' libraries and by the State Education Department. There was a strong feeling among the participants that the plan should be reviewed by the participating libraries and that their feedback would need to be taken into consideration in developing the final plan. There was broad agreement that any plan would succeed to the degree that it was understood and accepted by the participants.

* After development of the final plan, the groups felt that each region's planning committee would need to consider means of monitoring and assessing the plan in the future. Possibilities raised included: periodic surveys of the participating libraries; review of ILL activity in the region; and review of acquisition statistics related to the state funds. Some groups felt that the planning committees should be maintained to carry out this review; others felt that the Reference and Research Library Resources Systems directors and staff could do it; still others felt that a new group, or committee, could be formed to carry out the periodic review.

What elements should be common to all of the regional plans?

The final discussion area of the groups was intended to develop a list of elements which should be common to each plan. The intent was to indicate to the State Library staff what they need to be thinking about in developing a format which could be used by each region in submitting their written plan for approval. It is expected that the substance of the plans would vary within a consistent format. The elements that were discussed at the Conference are listed below:

* Organization and Participation in the Plan - this element could include a listing of participating libraries and a description of how the plan will be managed, including the role of the Reference and Research Library Resources Program director and the role of particular committees, etc.

* Goals of the Plan - this element would indicate the planning committee's expectations of the program within the region - that is, what they hope to accomplish with the particular plan proposed.

* Methodology - this element could outline, briefly, how the plan was developed and how it is to be implemented.

* Description of Current Collection Development Activities in the Region - this element would describe what has gone on in the past and what is going on currently in the region in the area of resource sharing and/or coordinated collection development. It might include a general description of local, regional and national programs which influenced the design of the plan.

* Analysis of Collection Strengths and Weaknesses - this section of the plan would describe the particular needs of the region in terms of existing collection strengths and weaknesses.

* Role of Major Resource Centers - this element would address the issue of the special needs of the region's major libraries, particularly in terms of potential demands on their collections and the attendant costs.

* Status of and Plans for Document Delivery within the Region - this section would describe any existing or planned delivery systems within the region, and could include a discussion of bibliographic access.

* Plan for Expenditure of State Funds for Coordinated Collection Development - this section would outline the plans for the actual expenditure of funds from this program and might provide guidelines for the individual libraries, while dealing with the issue of institutional needs and prerogatives.

* Plan for Assessment of Results - this element would outline how the region intends to assess the results of the program, and what measures it will use in this process.

CHANGES IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND THEIR IMPACT
ON COORDINATED COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Summary of Presentation by Jay Lucker, Director
Massachusetts Institute of Technology Libraries
Cambridge, Massachusetts.

According to reports in the Chronicle of Higher Education and elsewhere, the past ten years have been a period of sustained financial stringency during which colleges and universities have received less income and consequently had reduced buying power. During this period, institutions emphasized maintaining enrollments and tuition income, and therefore spent more money on student aid and recruitment as well as instituting courses in popular new fields such as computer science. Normal operating costs were rising faster than inflation, and most schools responded by trying to control their ongoing expenditures. Reductions included small economies in areas such as energy use, library hours, institutional memberships, sports programs, part-time faculty, travel funds, holding faculty salary increases at less than the increases in cost of living; and deferring maintenance on the physical plant and equipment. Reserve funds diminished, and so did venture capital; gifts tended to be used for operational expenses rather than placed in endowments, and library collections were not kept up to date. In a situation like this, there could be less response to new technology, and it became more difficult to effect change. Nevertheless, difficult decisions had to be made between vocational and liberal arts courses; there is now at many institutions an emphasis on professionally oriented programs and fewer humanities and social sciences programs.

Today the news is much the same. Inflation continues to affect libraries. There has been a loss of federal funds for research, and research contracts historically have greatly benefited academic libraries. At MIT, with $350 million in research funding, half the library budget of $6.5 million has come from grant funds. Of course, this is proportionate to the individual library's budget; $2,000 on a $2 million budget has not much impact, but $2,000 on a $50,000 budget makes considerable difference. Restoration of funds is hoped for, but questionable. In 1983, there will be no Title II funding if current administration plans are upheld by the Congress.

Possible changes in retirement laws also affect the future financial picture. The longer faculty stay, the more money is required for salaries and benefits, and there can be fewer younger faculty added. If the age requirements for retirement are eliminated, it may be necessary to reassess existing tenure rules.

Lack of Capital

At most institutions, there is no funding for adaptations of technology to achieve future savings. Tuition has been a source of such funding in the past, but with tuition rising, the private/public gap has narrowed and private schools are forced to look at the possibilities of adult education and to raise money through performing applied research. Endowments have not kept pace with inflation, and tax laws provide little incentive for contributions for education; most foundations no longer grant funds for books or buildings. Yet students buy fewer and fewer books and rely more and more on libraries due to the rising cost of education.

Curriculum Changes

Curriculum development is an issue that has an immense impact on libraries. There is also a lack of venture capital for covering the costs attached to changing the curriculum--faculty must be released to plan changes but there is no money to hire replacements in the meantime. For most institutions, turnaround time is a major problem. There is a need to scale down or phase out faculty and students in the programs being cut or eliminated. If programs are reinstated, however, the library's problem is to fill in collection gaps. MIT faced this difficulty when it phased out offerings in mining in 1960; in the seventies coal became important as a public policy issue and programs were reinstated. The MIT Libraries then had the task of rebuilding the collection base.

Students

Student populations now are smaller and more homogeneous, with many institutions competing for the same students. There is a wider recruitment effort, and money has come from operating budgets to meet such expenses. There is an increasing possibility that some students will be admitted on the ability to pay rather than on their ability to do the classwork. Interests exhibited by students also change; they are cyclical and vary among fields in a constant up and down movement in interest levels.

Library Funding

Facing these changes, libraries have become more accountable for their use of funds. As the Pittsburgh Study on use of library materials showed, when money is tight students and faculty become very interested in how libraries use funds. Unfortunately, there is no real basis for estimating costs and benefits--for instance, the value and cost of interlibrary loans, and what benefits accrue for not buying particular material. The identification of who benefits from past expenditures, how much library service is wanted and needed, and what service patterns beyond on-site clientele should be continued are major issues facing academic libraries.

To relate to the institutional decision-making process, libraries need to know their costs on a per-program basis. They may then return funds if departments are cut--if cost figures are unknown, administrations will specify the dollar amounts. Librarians need to be involved in institutional decision-making procedures such as budget and promotion/tenure decisions. Even though librarians may not always win in institutional discussions, there needs to be at least an opportunity to influence decisions.

Coordinated Collection Development

Accreditation agencies now review cooperative efforts among schools and libraries very carefully. Libraries have the responsibility for identifying resources not on campus and planning to make them available. The New York plan for coordinated development of collections thus will be watched with much interest. Several factors are pressing to make such programs work: an economic incentive, the feeling that coordinated development is inevitable for survival, and the perception of alternatives for cutting collections. Some are cut horizontally-5% across the board for example. Vertical cuts involve a deliberate decision to reduce responsibility for collecting in particular areas.

There are other factors too, such as investing in better bibliographic access to other collections. Libraries have found that the capital costs of storage and the difficulties of building storage buildings have increased, and we have noted upcoming changes in publishing that may make it less necessary to buy materials. Preservation--the need to keep as well as to acquire--is an important priority. With technology in place so that we know where items are located, the next problem is to move them from place to place. Delivery by the U.S. Postal Service, our mainstay in the past, should now be relegated to the horse and buggy period. Facsimile transmission will improve rapidly in the near future. MIT now has a transmission system that sends digital information over high-speed lines at 15¢ per page. The development of alternatives such as this one, and optical disk storage are crucial to improving library services.

The library's function is to adhere to present services but to consider future capabilities—to serve both today's student and tomorrow's. Administrations have accepted resource sharing as an economical innovation, but this acceptance has not always filtered down to faculty. Faculty have been more inclined to transport people to collections than to promote inter-institutional cooperation. The real key is to begin with institutional cooperation and then progress to coordinated collection development. National possibilities such as a national periodicals system will build on local cooperation. Such a system would be a central store supporting regional needs and will require a document delivery system that works. Prospects for the national system are currently not very bright, however, and those planning for coordinated collection development will do well not to count on it. For the present and immediate future, regional approaches such as that which you are embarking on in New York State offer the most hope for improved coordinated collection development.

PLANNING TECHNIQUES FOR DEVELOPING COORDINATED COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Summary of Presentation by Jeffrey Gardner, Associate,
Office of Management Studies, Association of Research Libraries,
Washington, D.C.

There are five assumptions that I make about the planning processes which are likely to be used in the New York State Reference and Research Library Resources System regions for the state's program of coordinated collection development. The first is that the planning process is likely to be designed and carried out by groups rather than by individuals. That is, groups of representative librarians from within each region will collectively determine how the coordinated collection development program for those regions will operate. My second assumption is that there will be considerable flexibility among the nine regions as to how their plans are designed and operated. A third assumption is that each regional plan will reflect existing cooperative collection development programs, both within the region and beyond the region. My fourth assumption is that each plan will need to recognize and deal with the conflicting needs and interests of a variety of institutions within the region and that those conflicting interests will, to some extent, represent the different sizes and types of institutions within each region. My fifth assumption is that some uniformity will need to exist among the regions' plans and that this uniformity will probably be particularly obvious in terms of format.

The integrated planning approach discussed below is general in nature but its elements can be easily adapted to any of the regions' needs. There are four major components to this approach and each needs to be considered when initiating a planning process. The first component is the development of substantive understanding of the issues involved by the planning group. This requires some commitment to a data gathering process and a sharing of the information among the members of the group. The second component is an analytical process which interprets the information gathered and moves the group toward development of its specific plan. A third component is the interpersonal dimension of the group decision-making process. The last component which needs to be considered is the political element of a planning process, in which political realities are taken into consideration and an "ideal" plan is tested against the political realities of a region and adapted accordingly.

Phase I: Problem Definition

The initial step in the problem definition phase is the sharing of information among group members to clarify the group's assignment. Information that should be understood by each group member includes: any legal requirements for the plan; any constraints or special opportunities that might exist for developing the plan; and any format requirements for the plan. The intent is to develop a shared understanding among planning group members of the parameters and goals of their efforts. The interactions required in this phase include sharing information among the members of the group, resolving any major differences in interpretation of the charge to the group, and

reaching consensus on the group's specific objectives and deadlines. There are three traps that a planning group can easily slip into in this phase: one is the tendency to assume that everyone in the group knows and understands more than they actually do about the group's charge; another is to rely exclusively on so-called "insiders" for the required information; the third is to move too quickly in this phase and to jump to conclusions with inadequate discussion.

Phase II: Problem Exploration

The second phase of an integrated planning process is typically one of gathering substantive information regarding the problem being addressed. Elements to be considered would include: what's going on now, both within the region and in other coordinated collection development programs; what people in the region are looking for in the plan; and what has been done elsewhere that can be instructive and helpful in developing the plan. Possible interactions, or specific activities, for this phase include: reading relevant documents and articles on coordinated collection development; interviewing selected librarians in the region on their needs; surveying the region's participating libraries; and group discussions of some of the issues involved. The traps in this phase of an integrated planning process include: collecting more information than is either required or manageable; collecting too small an amount of information to make informed judgments; and taking information at face value without evaluating it in terms of possible biases of the source.

Phase III: Beginning the Analysis

The overall intent of this phase is to begin to generate ideas and to list alternative approaches to coordinated collection development, based on the information that was gathered and the understanding of the problem that was developed in the previous phases. The quality of the interpersonal process is particularly important in this phase since the quality of the results will depend, to a considerable degree, on the way in which the members of the group deal with each other. The work of this phase will consist largely of group discussions and possible interactions including brainstorming - that is, the development of lists of as many possible approaches to the problem without critiquing each as it appears on the list. Other interactions include: encouraging other members of the group to contribute; developing ideas as they occur to you; accepting the ideas of others as worthy of serious consideration; and cooperating in moving toward common ideas. In this kind of group activity, several traps are possible. Groups frequently focus on the first good idea that comes along, closing off discussion prematurely. There is also a tendency for groups to avoid conflict by feigning agreement when it is not actually present. Another potentially damaging tendency is to focus immediately on why an idea won't work, without considering ways to get around constraints. Finally, groups frequently allow their thinking to be controlled by their perception of what people outside of the group expect from them. This last can be particularly true in terms of what they believe authority figures to expect from them and can lead them to limit their thinking to the predictable and the ordinary.

Phase IV: Choosing from Options

During this phase the group typically moves from generating lists of ideas and options to selecting the best possible approach from those lists. The primary action in this phase is the evaluation of alternatives in a rational way. It is frequently useful to consider the advantages and disadvantages of each option in terms of probable impact, cost, and feasibility of each. The final action in this phase is to decide from among the options and to base that decision on the analysis that has occurred. The interactions within the group include an emphasis on analysis rather than on attacking and/or defending particular points of view. What is required is for the group to look at the positive and negative aspects of each option as a group, rather than for individuals to preselect their personal favorites from among the available options to promote as the "best" answer, in a win-lose environment. The approach requires tolerance of differences and a willingness to explore those differences in an open, productive fashion.

The result of these discussions should be consensus among the members of the group around an approach which is at least acceptable to each, and which will have the support of each of them in the future. The consensus should reflect not only an active consideration of all available options, but also the group's consideration of anticipated problems and how they might be dealt with if and when they occur.

Again, there are a series of possible traps in this phase. The group might go through a random rather than systematic testing of alternatives, which can be, at best, time-consuming and, at worst, incomplete. Another possible trap is for the majority of a group to ignore the differences of a minority in order to speed up the process. A third possible trap is for the group to settle on a "safe" solution - that is, one which takes no risks with major components in the region or state, but which may not be the best possible solution. Finally, there is the danger of seeking the ideal solution, without considering costs or political realities.

Phase V: Action Planning

Having selected the best alternative from a list of possible approaches, the next step is to develop a plan for implementing that choice. The major parts of this process are to list the specific steps needed for implementation, to identify the resources needed to support those steps, determine responsibility for carrying them out, determine a schedule with deadlines for each step, and recommend an approach to monitoring and/or reviewing progress. The group interactions in this phase include assuring full group participation in the development of the action plan, identifying possible resistance to the plan, and designing a strategy for developing commitment to the plan beyond the group. Possible traps in this phase are to assume that all participants in the recommended program will have the best intentions - or the same intentions as the group, to assume that all participants will accept the plan without discussion, and to assume the plan's feasibility without adequate testing and consideration of costs and acceptability.

Phase VI: Evaluation

The final phase is to evaluate the results of the planning process. One very simple way to do this is to compare the results with the group's original objectives and determine whether the plan meets the group's original expectations. Another need here is to identify new problems which are a result of the plan. For instance, it may be that the plan will have an impact on existing ILL arrangements within the state, calling for changes in those arrangements. It is also important to work toward getting feedback on the plan from its participants. Finally, the group should consider possible ways to assess the program's results periodically in the future. The most frequently occurring trap in this phase of a planning process is to simply omit consideration of evaluation entirely. The other typical trap is to expect too much, too soon, when evaluating a program.

Summary

The major steps in an integrated planning program can be summarized as follows:

1. Determine who/what group will develop the plan.
2. Determine the requirements of the plan from the State.
3. Develop the goals of the plan.
4. Learn what's going on now in the region.
5. Develop a list of alternative approaches.
6. Evaluate the alternatives and make choices.
7. Develop an action plan with assigned responsibilities.
8. Develop an approach for assessing the plan and its impact.

OVERVIEW OF TECHNIQUES FOR DESCRIBING, ASSESSING & COMPARING COLLECTIONS

Summary of presentation by Jutta Reed-Scott, Director of Collection Development and Bibliographic Control, Dartmouth College Library Hanover, New Hampshire

Over the years many efforts have been undertaken to describe, assess and compare collections. But many of these did not progress beyond a compilation of general policies or a fragmented attempt to analyze existing collections. Indeed enough wrecks now dot our library landscape to warn all travelers of the hazards of coordinated collection evaluation. In recent years, the current economic conditions faced by libraries and the enormous technological advances have given a renewed impetus to coordinated collection evaluation. It is encouraging to observe the great activity and progress in this regard in the last few years. There are a number of very active projects that we can look at and that can serve as models. Among these are the RLG collection analysis project which is now being tested by some ARL libraries, the efforts carried out by Metro and the Long Island Resources Council and the National Shelflist Count projects.

Among the key elements in a coordinated collection evaluation effort I would list the following six.

The first and perhaps most crucial one is agreement on basic objectives

and achievable goals. Frequently, coordinated collection evaluation projects have shriveled or died because of a lack of a clear identification of goals at the outset. While the objectives for a coordinated collection development project may differ substantially between different groups of libraries, agreement at the outset is essential. For RLG the primary objectives of the collection evaluation effort were to identify subject strength, to strengthen under-represented fields and to assign collection responsibility for specific subjects. Obviously another group of libraries may identify quite different objectives. In many cases the major objective is to avoid unnecessary duplication of little-used research items, or to aid in jointly acquiring expensive items. Objectives state at the outset the purpose of the information gathering effort and also clearly define how the information will be used. They are key criteria for choosing the appropriate technique.

The second essential element for a coordinated collection evaluation effort is agreement on a process for coordinating this effort. In the RLG case the Collection Management and Development Committee directs the effort and is the coordinating committee. Metro also depended on a committee. In most cases the establishment of a coordinating committee is the obvious choice. But again, it is essential that attention be given to how the process will be actually carried out. Availability of a group of an individual to direct the project is a factor in determining an appropriate technique.

The third essential element is agreement on a framework for describing collections. The obvious two choices for such a framework are the

classification approach and the subject approach. The advantages of the classification versus the subject approach have been raised in writing collection development policies. RLG libraries, at the outset of the undertaking of the coordinated collection development effort, reached a very difficult decisin to use the LC classification as the basic framework. The advantages of the classification for describing collections are obvious. The LC classification provides a lingua franca for participating libraries and it also provides a means for quantitative measurements on the collection growth and collection size. At tne same time, I think, we all are aware of the problems inherent in the LC classification, e.g. interdisciplinary subjects. To overcome these disadvantages some libraries have chosen subject descriptors as their framework for describing their collection. Among these are the recent effort undertaken by the Long Island Resources Council. In this case the framework is a set of subject headings derived from the Library of Congress. One disadvantage is agreement on scope and meaning of terms. On balance, I personally believe that the LC classification is probably a more realistic approach for describing collections, particularly among a group of research libraries.

The fourth element required is agreement on a plan of operation. Such a plan would include written guidelines and an implementation strategy. The work plan agreed to by the RLG libraries has been the development of a series of separate subject worksheets. Each subject worksheet, or conspectus, is a matrix of data arranged by member library and by subject descriptors with the corresponding LC classes. For instance, there is a language and literature

conspectus, there is a history conspectus, there is an economic conspectus, etc. In most cases worksheets are prepared by a subject slelector with extensive expertise in the particular field and LC classification ranges are given for the appropriate break-downs of a given discipline. RLG libraries anticipate over 4,000 descriptors will ultimately be compiled. The process of mapping collection strength in RLG libraries is an evolutionary process. At this point about 70% of the LC classes have been completed and RLG libraries anticipate that the remaining worksheets will be completed sometime next year. Worksheets were prepared over a period of time so that libraries did not at the outset have available to them all the worksheets. A number of problems are inherent in that approach. For example, interpretation changed in the course of the evaluation project and in a few cases libraries did indeed have to make adjustments in the earlier worksheets.

Although Metro also used the LC classification as its framework, Metro used only 1,400 subject descriptors. Furthermore, the complete set of subject descriptors was made available to libraries at the outset so that the scope and the depth of the effort were evident at the beginning.

The most vital element of a coordinated collection evaluation effort is agreement on the methodology or methodologies for evaluating the collections. As we all know there are a number of techniques for evaluating collections. The two basic approaches are the collection centered approach and a user centered approach. Since use or use centered approaches generally do not yield data useful for comparison, collection centered techniques are usually

more applicable. I will not attempt to survey the various methods. I think you will find an excellent survey in the article by George Bonn, which is included in your handout. Lancaster also gives a comprehensive review in his book, Measurement and Evaluation of Library Services.

We all recognize that in collection centered methodologies the information obtained is limited in several ways. Some methodologies rely heavily on the subjective evaluation by the selector. One example of this methodology is scanning materials on the shelf or reviewing materials in the shelf list. Other methods use quantitative measures. The prime example is the national shelf list measurement effort. There are limitation as well as benefits in both approaches. But in the final analysis precise solution to this dilemma is using a variety of methods. While any one method will probably give incomplete data, the cumulative information obtained from a number of different approaches will give objective information about the strength and the quality of the collection.

To that end, RLG libraries use a three-phase approach in evaluating the collections. In the first phase, subject selectors use what I call the "enlightened subjectivity approach" to describe their collection. As much as possible the intent is to describe collecting activities absolutely, not relatively. That is, the selectors must assume a national perspective and have both broad cognizance of the bibliography in his or her appropriate field and be familiar with the holdings of some of the other member libraries. The selector should also have knowledge of current publications and the book

trade. It should be obvious to all of you that this effort asks much of the subject selectors. It also invariably raises the questions of how accurate is the data.

The second phase is the revision of the combined worksheets. These are returned from the RLG central staff to each library for a final review as well as for corrections. Personally I find this one of the most useful phases in the process of building this coordinated collection evaluation instrument. One's objectivity tends to be reinforced when one sees the numbers or the values assigned by other institutions to a specific subject.

In the third phase of the collection evaluation effort by RLG libraries, the initial cut of the collection evaluation is supplemented by testing with a number of different methods. From the beginning of this project RLG libraries recognized that they needed to find a way to minimize the inherent subjectivity and to find a more objective way of measuring the collection values. At present the RLG libraries are testing two additional approaches for collection evaluation. The first is a list checking approach. To test the accuracy of assigned values for British literature, a thousand titles were selected at random from the Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature. Each institution is checking these titles in their catalogs. The percentage findings are then reported so that from this list checking will emerge a range of values which will correlate with specific collection codes. The second chosen methology is quantitative measurement. To that end, the RLG Music Program Committee is planning to use shelf list measurements for the LC

classifications which are part of the music conspectus. The purpose is to see if there is a correlation between quantitative data and the values assigned. While list-checking and shelf list measurement predominate in most collection evaluation projects, the Cleveland area libraries use the safari approach successfully in evaluating their collections. As the name implies, subject experts from a variety of the participating libraries get together and actually inspect and evaluate the member collections through a series of site visits. It should be evident that the safari approach is a very time consuming one. But it does supplement the initial subjective assessment with additional data.

The sixth and final element for a coordinated collection evaluation project is agreement as the outset for a process for analysis. Or another way of looking at it--what information do we need to collect and how will we use it? For the RLG effort the analysis of the completed worksheet consists of line by line consideration of all subjects that fall into one of the following two categories: First, to identify what are called uncovered or endangered fields, that is fields for which no institution reported a research or comprehensive collection; and secondly, candidate fields for primary collecting responsibilities where only one or two institutions reported collections above an instructional level.

Part of the process for anaysis also requires a method for keeping information up to date. Given the complexity and the depth of the RLG undertaking the information will very soon be out-dated unless a method is

found for maintaining the accuracy of the data. The approach chosen by the RLG libraries is a fairly complex one. All of the data is input into a special automated file. Member libraries will be able to search and access this file and will also be able to change the values for a particular subject as their collecting activity changes over time.

I beleive it is possible with careful planning and with a strong commitment to develop a system of coordinated collection management. The model tnat RLG provides can be a useful starting point and a good opportunity for observing. But, the determination of the appropriate approach must weigh many factors. It must also determine whether it is better to adopt an existing model or develop a new approach. Your goals and assessment of what is feasible will in tne final analysis guide you in choosing the best possible approach in describing, assessing and comparing collections.

USING OCLC TAPES TO DESCRIBE COLLECTION STRENGTHS AND OVERLAP

Summary of Presentation by Glyn T. Evans
Director of Library Services
SUNY Central Administration

The Office of Library Services and the SUNY/OCLC Network, in the State University of New York Central Administration, have been developing programs for the purpose of analysing and assessing the disciplinary collection strength and degree of overlap among library collections. The work began with a U. S. Office of Education grant awarded in 1976 to develop "Collection Development Analysis based on OCLC Archival Tapes" (Eric ED 152-299).

Since then the work has expanded into relational studies between the library collection, based on data extracted from the OCLC tapes, and academic mission and enrollment based on campus-supplied academic administrative data gathered annually for the Higher Education General Information Survey (Eric ED 176-779).

Using a set of computer programs which are in full operation at the SUNY Central Computer Center, and some 550 HEGIS Taxonomy to L.C. Class Number look-up tables, it is now routinely possible to assess overlap and disciplinary strength based on OCLC tapes for a group of academic libraries. The libraries themselves select the data which are to be included in, or excluded from, the analyses.

The SUNY Office of Library Services participated in a series of studies designed jointly with the Central Reference and Research Library Resources System to test the utility of the programs in the Collection Planning Programs of the Reference and Research Library Resources System Councils. The joint committee agreed that four major studies would be done based on the following selected data:

a) All monograph "produces" cataloged between April 1,1980 - March 31, 1982.

b) All "serials" cataloged into the system since 1974.

Data from Colgate University, Hamilton and Kirkland Colleges, LeMoyne College, SUNY Morrisville, SUNY College of Technology (Utica), SUNY Upstate Medical College, Syracuse University, and Utica College were included in the study.

Overlap and disciplinary studies were performed on these data as follows:

Study 1	Monographs 4/1980-3/81
Study 2	Monographs 4/1981-3/82
Study 3	Monographs 4/1980-3/1982
Study 4	All serials

It was found that there was a very high degree of uniqueness (86%) in all studies and disciplines. The combined monograph study (Study 3) did show a drop of two or three percentage points in the degree of uniqueness over the longer two-year time span.

The following charts are examples of the summary results which can be derived from the analyses.

A fuller report of this work will appear in the Fall 1982 issue of The Bookmark, published by New York State Library.

RATIO TITLES: COPIES

1979-80

TOTAL TITLES	45981
TOTAL COPIES	52602
RATIO	1:1.14

EXAMPLES OF DISCIPLINES:

	TITLES	COPIES	RATIO
LETTERS	8476	10046	1:1.18
PHYS. SCI.	2375	2648	1:1.12
SOC. SCI.	15774	18489	1:1.17

LOWEST RATIO NOTED:

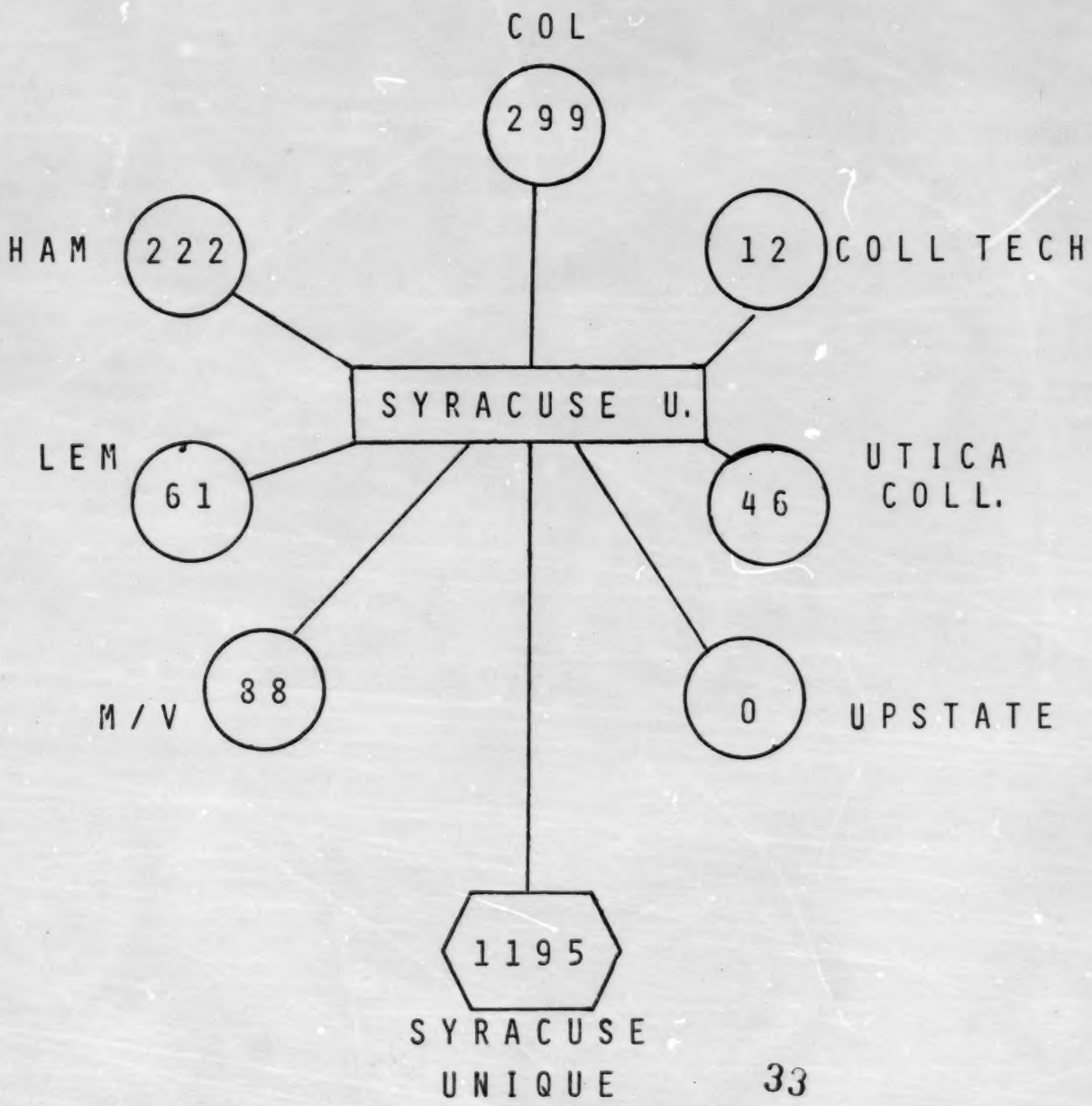
MATHEMATICS	1:1.07

HIGHEST RATIO NOTED:

LETTERS PSYCHOLOGY	1:1.18

RELATIONSHIPS

ENGLISH LITERATURE 1979-81



TITLES OVERLAP

	1979-80	1980-81	1979-81
UNIQUE	40891	40404	73646
2	3887	3722	8908
3	944	855	2617
4	204	206	733
5	45	49	201
6	6	19	54
7	4	1	12
8			

PERCENT OVERLAP

	1979-80	1980-81	1979-81
UNIQUE	88.9	89.3	85.46
2	8.5	8.2	10.33
3	2.05	1.9	3.03
4	0.44	0.45	0.85
5	0.09	0.10	0.23
6	0.01	0.04	0.06
7			0.01
8			

UNIQUE 1979-1981

CLASS: SOCIAL SCIENCES

	#	%
COLGATE	2487	10.4
HAMILTON	3338	14.0
LE MOYNE	1002	4.1
MORRISVILLE	568	2.4
COLL. TECH.	4258	17.8
UPSTATE MED.	244	1.0
SYRACUSE	11,175	46.8
UTICA COLL.	828	3.5
	23,900	

UNIQUE 1979-81

INSTITUTION

	#	%
COLGATE	6614	9
HAMILTON	9183	12.5
LE MOYNE	3338	4.5
MORRISVILLE	2689	3.6
COLL. TECH.	11,278	15.3
UPSTATE MED.	3,915	5.3
SYRACUSE	34,794	47.2
UTICA COLL.	1,888	2.6
	73,646	

RANK ORDER BY CLASS

1979-80 DATA

EXAMPLES:

	MOST TITLES			MOST UNIQUE		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
AREA STUDIES	SU	COL	HAM	SU	COL	HAM
BUS. & MGMENT.	SU	C TECH.	HAM	CT	SU	HAM
HEALTH PROFESSIONS	CT	SU	UPST	CT	SU	NPS
PHYSICAL SCIENCES	SU	HAM	COL	SU	HAM	COL
SOCIAL SCIENCES	SU	CT	HAM	CT	SU	HAM

TECHNIQUES FOR ASSESSING IMPACT OF COORDINATED COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Summary of Presentation by Gene Palmour, Director
Naval Information Program, Center for Naval Analyses
Alexandria, Virginia.

It is particularly useful to consider the assessment problem in the early planning stage. All too often, assessment or evaluation is an afterthought—considered only after programs are designed, developed and implemented. Your thoughts about assessment techniques will also sharpen your concept of coordinated collection development programs themselves.

I want to begin with comments on assessment and preconditions for assessing programs. Then we will try to construct a framework for assessing coordinated collection development

I will use the terms "assessibility" and "evaluation" interchangably, although I prefer "assessibility" for the kind of programs with which we are concerned since evaluation seems a stronger concept than assesibility.

Before program effectiveness can be properly assessed, certain preconditions must exist. At least three are essential:

1. The program must be clearly articulated.
2. Goals, objectives and expected effects must be clearly specified.
3. There must be a rationale for linking the program to the expected effects.

If the coordinated collection development plans fail to meet these preconditions, it is questionable whether the programs can be reasonably assessed.

Let's look more closely at each of the preconditions. First, the specification that the program be clearly articulated essentially implies that if you can't describe a program, you can't evaluate it. The description should include all elements of the program—funding, guidelines, policies, libraries involved, materials, staff, document delivery, and other factors.

Before we identify all the program elements, however, we need to define "coordinated collection development." Does the concept focus only on library materials? Does it include cooperative storage, weeding practices, and other stock control activities such as preservation? Does the program include all formats for library materials?

I like to see a single overall goal for a program, or a brief statement of purpose. As a working rule, if you can't write down the purpose in one sentence, the program is too complex to evaluate. As this conference should go a long way toward a clear articulation of programs, don't underestimate this important step. It is absolutely critical to any problem-solving approach.

I have worked on two projects on coordinated collection development, or cooperative collection development, and both projects were disappointing because we did not spend enough time defining the basic concepts.

The second precondition is carefully defining goals, objectives and expected effects. I adopt the convention of broad goals and specific objectives.

Goals, in my use of the term, provide the general direction and long-term targets the program hopes to achieve. Goals are seldom measurable. Objectives are specific stepping stones on the way to meeting a goal and hopefully are measurable in most, or at least some cases.

A few evaluators might say that we should not devote a lot of attention to predetermined goals in this kind of program because we can't anticipate the actual effects. There is a school that promotes goal-free evaluation. They found in evaluating minority educational programs that most of the actual effects were unintended. I would prefer to attempt to define some goals before a program is implemented.

Ask yourselves what evidence would indicate success. That should help in identifying what you hope the program will accomplish. If the program focus is on coordinated acquisition of materials, what are the desirable goals; e.g., free up funds to spend on more heavily used items, increase material availability, reduce storage space etc. We will talk more about some possible approaches for measuring effects later.

Let me give you a warning on setting goals and objectives. Don't fall into the measurement syndrome and oversimplify concepts for the sake of easy measurement. Over the years, we have found that not everything in the world can be quantified.

The third precondition is to specify a rationale for linking programs and effects. First, what are the causal assumptions about the program and its effects? If we invest in coordinated collection development, how will that impact our users?

Now, I am not speaking at this point about how to measure only the expected logical relationship between program and effects. The third precondition is really the requirement to construct some meaningful hypothesis for testing in the evaluation activities. This is the real thinking part of the process.

Let's go on to evaluation. The major question here is, who is the evaluation being done for—the state legislature, the state library, the region, the participating libraries, the users. The answer is probably "yes" to all five, and that presents an immediate problem of which perspective to take. Each group has a somewhat different set of success measures for a program.

The legislature will probably be more concerned with aggregate measures across all institutions, in other words, the total program. What kinds of effects will be required to justify the continuation of the program? They will probably be more concerned with broad economic and political measures. For example, how many people are affected, how many titles are purchased, how are institutions better able to allocate funds, how much space is saved, how much money is saved through reducing duplication, etc.

The State Library will have some additional requirements. Monitoring the program for accountability purposes is important here although the legislature finds that important too. Even at the regional or area level we are still primarily concerned with measures of success or impact across a number of institutions. A single criterion for success might be: to increase effectiveness at a fixed level of total expenditure across all libraries in the region. Most cooperative programs begin with a precondition that no single library will accrue negative benefits.

Dropping down to the user perspective, economic measures are less important than effectiveness measures of materials availability, timely service, convenience, etc. In fact, coordinated collection development may not even be visible to users.

Let's conclude with some comments on possible measurements and techniques. The real problem you face is whether you can expect to detect, in measurable terms, the impact of the program. We should distinguish, first between serials and monographs. Serials are easier to measure benefits for, because we've had more experience with estimating the benefits of owning versus borrowing. Then there's the measurement of cost of owning a title versus cost of requiring users to get that title through interlibrary loan.

For a monographs study, a recent client focused on adult nonfiction monographs. A thorough literature search and personal contacts yielded little on actual serious applications. Most of the operating programs identified were concerned with serials and selected very expensive titles. In the end, four approaches to determining collection strengths were identified:

1. Library self-nomination of strengths--the cheapest method.
2. "Expert" review of collections for strengths, with comparability across libraries assessed by some expert in the field.
3. A check of library holdings against standard lists, or results of citation analysis. This is easy to do, and produces objective comparable results which are of course subject to the quality of the list used.
4. Statistical analysis of collections, taking samples of books and analyzing them by subject, age, date of last circulation. One then finds percentage of titles by subject, titles owned, circulated, and used by interlibrary loan. The advantages of this method are that it produces comparable data, it is an informative exercise for staff and it seems a more objective method than the others. The disadvantages are that it is costly, and yields only quantitative indicators, when quality is an important consideration for collection development.

In pursuing the statistical approach for this client, we divided the analysis into five areas:

1. Ownership, availability and overlap of recently published books. For this we used a sample list of titles from the last five years of American Book Publishing Record. The result was that we found 15% owned by small academic libraries, and 2% owned by public libraries.
2. Age, subject, distribution and availability of titles in collections. This came from a shelf list sample. Each sample title was checked at the shelf to determine whether it was actually available.
3. Subject distribution and age of materials circulated. For this we recorded call number and publication date.
4. Subject distribution of previous year's acquisitions, compared with holdings.
5. Interlibrary loan title and subject requests from system libraries filled within and outside the system.

This kind of data collection in non-automated libraries is extremely time-consuming, particularly if it must be done periodically to assess--or measure--improvements in title or subject availability. A key consideration in designing any assessment program is to balance its costs against actual operating costs of the program being assessed. You need to implement an assessment approach that provides some quantitative and qualitative sense of results without overburdening the system, and finally, the assessment needs to provide data useful to both.